THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI DILIP SINGH JUDEV): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) There are 1,73,000 villages located in the fringe of the forests. People living in and around the forests are directly or indirectly involved in enjoyment of the benefits from the forests including income generation activities. The statistics of employment is not collected by the Ministry.

(c) The Forest Survey of India does the assessment of forest cover on a two year cycle basis. Overall, there has not been any reduction in forest cover in last three assessments which is evident from following figures:

Year	Forest Cover of India (in Sq. Km.)
1997	633,397
1999	637,293
2001	675,538

(d) Through Joint Forest Management (JFM) Programme, various institutional structures such as Village Forest Protection/Management Committees have been constituted involving people living in and around the forests for protection and development of forests. At present 27 States through 72,700 JFM Committees involving 46 lakh families are involved in protection of 16.60 million hectare of forestland. The Ministry is providing financial assistance to the State Governments for control and management of forest fires. In addition, assistance is being provided to North Eastern Region & Sikkim for development and strengthening of infrastructure for forest protection.

Research and investigation in FPIs

†1390. SHRI RAJIV RANJAN SINGH 'LALAN':
SHRI KAPIL SIBAL:

Will the Minister of FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that due to lack of research and investigation

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

in the field of food processing industries in the country, these industries are not developing as per expectations;

(b) if not, Government's reaction thereto and whether Government have formulated any Plan in this regard;

(c) whether it is also a fact that some institutes in the country are carrying out research and investigation work; and

(d) if so, the names of these institutes and the annual amount of economic assistance extended to them by Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES (SHRI N.T. SHANMUGAM): (a) No, Sir.

(b) In order to give impetus to Research & Development activities in this sector the Ministry of Food Processing Industries have formulated a Scheme *i.e.* "Scheme for Quality Assurance, Codex Standards and Research & Development". The scheme envisages financial assistance towards capital cost. Full assistance is available to Government research Institutions and Public Sector Undertakings while 33% of the capital cost is given as financial assistance to private institutions and industries.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) A number of Institutions like Central Food Technological Research Institute (CFTRI), Mysore, Defence Food Research Laboratory (DFRL), Mysore, Tamil Nadu Agriculture University, Avinashilingham Home Science University, CCS Haryana Agricultural University, Hissar, National Dairy Research Institute, Karnal, G.B. Pant University of Agricultural Science & Technology, ICAR Institutions, Regional Research Laboratories are engaged in research and development in processed food sector and have also received financial assistance from the Ministry. A sum of Rs. 750 lakhs has been earmarked during the current year for the scheme.